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First Canadian COVID-19 death recorded in B.C., health officials say

CTV News Vancouver



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VANCOUVER -- The first Canadian death in connection to COVID-19 has been recorded in B.C., health officials announced Monday.

One of the residents of a care home in North Vancouver's Lynn Valley, whose case was announced Saturday, died on Sunday, provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix announced during a news conference. The man was in his 80s and had a number of underlying health issues.

"This is obviously a very sad day for all of us, but especially for the family and loved ones of the man who passed away," Dix said.

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When the provincial health ministry announced new cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, it mentioned that two residents of the North Vancouver long-term care home were among the new patients. Besides the man in his 80s, the other person whose case was announced Saturday is a woman in her 70s and she is in stable condition.

A care home worker at that facility has also been diagnosed with COVID-19 and Vancouver Coastal Health is conducting an in-depth investigation to track where else the infected

employee may have worked. The care home is following its outbreak protocol, meaning it will be curtailing the number of people moving in and out of the facility.

"We want everybody to stay home if they're sick, even if they have the sniffles ... even if you have no relationship to COVID-19," Henry said, adding that visits to long-term care homes won't be banned.

"Long-term care homes, are homes and the residents that live there need the interaction but right now we want people to be really, really careful ... if you need to be with somebody and you're not feeling well, let the care home know."

Henry said testing is still ongoing at the Lynn Valley care home.

Five new cases in B.C.

In addition to announcing the fatality, officials also announced five new confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection. One is a health care worker in her 40s who is connected to the same Lynn Valley care home who is now in isolation at her home in the Fraser Valley.

The second new case is a woman in her 50s who was recently in Iran. The third is a man in his 30s who recently returned from Italy. Both are in the Vancouver Coastal Health Region and are in isolation at home.

The final two new cases announced Monday are close contacts with the community case – a man in his teens and another man in his 50s. They both live in the Fraser Health region and are isolated at home.

Those five new cases bring the provincial total up to 32. Four people are considered fully recovered, Henry said, adding that testing is expected to come back soon on a number of patients whose symptoms have resolved completely.

Three other patients are in hospital recovering, Henry said. Two of them are in the Fraser Health region and are in stable condition. The third is at Vancouver General Hospital and while she's in the ICU, she's in stable condition.

Half of the province's cases are connected to travel to Iran, while five are connected to travel to China.

Letters sent to B.C. schools

Over the weekend, [parents at two Surrey schools were sent letters](#) alerting them to incidents involving people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Parents and guardians of students at Serpentine Elementary School were advised that someone now diagnosed with the virus had been inside the school gym as part of a community-

use rental. The letter confirmed the patient was not a student of the school and the risk to students was low, as a deep clean was done at the school over the weekend.

Meanwhile, a letter was also sent to the Sullivan Heights Secondary School community on Sunday, which said someone with a now-confirmed case of COVID-19 is a member of the school community. It's not known it was a student or staff member, but as that person wasn't showing symptoms while they were at the school, health officials said the risk was low there as well.

Henry said the letters were sent "mostly to reassure people."

"There were people who were in those facilities who have tested positive for COVID-19, however they were asymptomatic which means we do not believe there is a risk to people who are using those facilities," she said.

"The schools have been very proactive and did additional cleaning over the weekend to make sure that everybody is reassured that they're safe."

Henry said processes are in place in all B.C. schools to enhance cleaning.

Nationwide, there at least 74 confirmed cases of COVID-19. As of 10:30 a.m. Monday, 34 cases were confirmed in Ontario, four in Quebec and four in Alberta.

With files from CTV News Vancouver's Jen St. Denis and Sheila Scott

Correction:

An earlier version of this story said there were two new positive cases amongst residents of the Lynn Valley care home. In fact, the only new case announced Monday that is connected to that care home is a health worker.

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